

Threats, vs us

4/3/74

When Jim Lesar phoned me from Houston tonight after the Foreman deposition (sure he did well), after we discussed it and a few precautions that should be taken to guard the transcript, it being a safe presumption Foreman knows the reporter well (and the unpredictable Bud had the tape recorder and failed to tape it!), he made elliptical reference to what has to be a death or kidnap threat against what has to be Bob Livingston alone. He knows less than all because Bud and Bud kept it from him allegedly in his own interest.

I gave Jim a few anecdotes from my own past with which he might pep Bob up a bit, a few suggestions, and he plans to get together with me as soon as he returns, which may be several days yet. However, in thinking about this I draw upon the experiences represented by these anecdotes.

Bob is the least essential of the defense team. He is local counsel simply because he is a Tennessee lawyer.

What is most relevant of these anecdotes that Jim liked is Jean Andrews dictum, "They don't hit by Western Union." If this is a threat against Bob, he is not essential to the case; has no knowledge of it of his own, and serves one purpose only: intimidation. This would seem to be true if the threat were for a kidnapping instead of a murder. So there seems to be no reason to threaten him over the case based on what he is doing in it.

He is running for Memphis DA, and that would make it entirely different were the threat over that. He would be a non-machine DA, maybe the first in generations. Canale resigned so a hand-picked successor could be named: Stanton, Jr., so of the public defender and assistant public defender himself.

The threat, if serious on the Ray case, is most likely intended to intimidate Jim because he by now had an excellent command of the fact and has done just about all the legal work. Next likely is me because I have done the investigating and it can be assumed that I am holding back evidence others may not have. Next would be Bud, who finances most of it.

As I wondered what I might be able to do without attracting any attention, Jim having appeared to be unwilling to do what I did in N.O., which he remembered: bring the FBI in, which means also with responsibility, immediately. (He may feel that Bob should make the decision.) I thought of going to see out local chief of police.

And then I remembered a remarkable coincidence: I put all new water hose on the car the beginning of last winter. When we got home this evening, there was a his that came from water dripping on the hot block, apparently from around a loose clamp. So, I dared not use the car at night because there might not be enough water in it. There should be no problem getting to the service station, though, for I can coast most of the way.

Remarkable coincidence!

As I thought of what could relate to this (Jim says it happened Saturday and with a man weighing 250 lbs and 6'2"), one thing that came to mind immediately (other than the change in the legal situation and the probability of a trial which has to acquit Ray) is that Paul Valentine is working on a story of a deal offered Ray by DJ. Obviously no such deal would be offered to a man DJ really believed guilty.

I asked Jim is there ever ethnic identification and he said not but there is a distinctive characteristic, which makes me suspicious immediately. He will tell me in person. I had in mind more than possible origin, racially.

Of the things that should be attempted, one of the first should be trying to get a list of Foreman's clients who could fit this description. Foreman, next to those who did the job, has most to lose. And he has had the right kind of clients!